BYAAAH!!!

NO WEBSITE
NO MIRC
NO E-MAIL

PROJECT: KAGETORA
VOLUME: 10
SCANNED: OCT 08

FOR THE FANS BY A FAN. REMEMBER, IF YOU LIKE IT, GO BUY IT!
PAGES HAVE BEEN CROPPED TO GET RID OF THE GUTTER,
BUT IT'S STILL VISIBLE,
AS I REALLY DON'T CARE TOO MUCH ABOUT THE QUALITY.
SCANNED) CROPPED) CLEANED) SAVED.
ALSO I'VE DONE A QUICK JOB ON ANY DOUBLE PAGE SPREADS,
JUST TO MAKE IT EASIER TO READ.
IF YOU DON'T LIKE MY ATTEMPT, TOUGH SHIT.
IF YOU WISH TO SHARE THIS, FEEL FREE.
ALL I ASK YOU LEAVE THE PAGES AND TAGS INTACT.
APART FROM THAT I DONT CARE.
ANYHOW ENJOY!

NOTES:

HAPPY TO SAY I'M STILL ALIVE.
JUST BEEN REALLY BUSY FOR THE LAST 8 MONTHS OR SO. SINCE ITS OCTOBER AND 3 YEARS SINCE I STARTED TO SCAN, I THOUGHT I'D START TO GET THIS YEARS XMAS BATCH RELEASE STARTED.
SO FOR ALL THOSE WHO REMEMBER LAST XMAS, I HOPE TO SEE YOU AGAIN!
ALSO BECAUSE I HAD 2 COPIES OF THIS BOOK, IT'S BEN TAKEN APART AND SCANNED.

RU

10

KAGE TORA

AKIRA SEGAMI

デルレイ

KAGE TORA

10

AKIRA SEGAMI

Ballantine Books

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Kagetora the ninja is in love with his master's daughter, Yuki. But Kagetora's strong sense of duty has kept him from confessing his feelings . . . until now. He has decided that nothing's more important than love, and he's ready to tell Yuki just how he feels. But does sharing his feelings for Yuki mean that Kagetora can't be her ninja trainer any longer?

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KAGETORA
カゲトラ

Akira Segami

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Satsuki Yamashita

ADAPTED BY
Nunzio DeFilippis & Christina Weir

LETTERED BY
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Featured in Magazine Special 2006 No. 2 – 2006 No. 7 except for No. 3

KAGETORA

A Note from the Author

Treasure every encounter,
for it will never recur.
They say that even a
chance meeting is due to karma
in a previous life.
I've met many people and
was able to come this far with
this manga.
Now there's only one volume left!
To all the readers who
helped me make it happen, thank
you and please stick with me
till the end!

Honorifics Explained

Throughout the Del Rey Manga books, you will find Japanese honorifics left intact in the translations. For those not familiar with how the Japanese use honorifics and, more important, how they differ from American honorifics, we present this brief overview.

Politeness has always been a critical facet of Japanese culture. Ever since the feudal era, when Japan was a highly stratified society, use of honorifics—which can be defined as polite speech that indicates relationship or status—has played an essential role in the Japanese language. When you address someone in Japanese, an honorific usually takes the form of a suffix attached to one's name (example: "Asuna-san"), is used as a title at the end of one's name, or appears in place of the name itself (example: "Negi-sensei," or simply "Sensei!").

Honorifics can be expressions of respect or endearment. In the context of manga and anime, honorifics give insight into the nature of the relationship between characters. Many English translations leave out these important honorifics, and therefore distort the feel of the original Japanese. Because Japanese honorifics contain nuances that English honorifics lack, it is our policy at Del Rey not to translate them. Here, instead, is a guide to some of the honorifics you may encounter in Del Rey Manga.

-san: This is the most common honorific and is equivalent to Mr., Miss, Ms., or Mrs. It is the all-purpose honorific and can be used in any situation where politeness is required.

-sama: This is one level higher than "-san," and is used to confer great respect.

-dono: This comes from the word "tono," which means "lord." It is an even higher level than "-sama" and confers utmost respect.

-kun: This suffix is used at the end of boys' names to express familiarity or endearment. It is also sometimes used by men among friends, or when addressing someone younger or of a lower station.

-chan: This is used to express endearment, mostly toward girls. It is also used for little boys, pets, and even among lovers. It gives a sense of childish cuteness.

Bozu: This is an informal way to refer to a boy, similar to the English terms "kid" and "squirt."

Sempai/ Senpai: This title suggests that the addressee is one's senior in a group or organization. It is most often used in a school setting, where underclassmen refer to their upperclassmen as "sempai." It can also be used in the workplace, such as when a newer employee addresses an employee who has seniority in the company.

Kohai: This is the opposite of "sempai" and is used toward underclassmen in school or newcomers in the workplace. It connotes that the addressee is of a lower station.

Sensei: Literally meaning "one who has come before," this title is used for teachers, doctors, or masters of any profession or art.

-[blank]: This is usually forgotten in these lists, but it is perhaps the most significant difference between Japanese and English. The lack of honorific means that the speaker has permission to address the person in a very intimate way. Usually, only family, spouses, or very close friends have this kind of permission. Known as *yobisute*, it can be gratifying when someone who has earned the intimacy starts to call one by one's name without an honorific. But when that intimacy hasn't been earned, it can be very insulting.

KAGETORA
カゲトラ
10
Akira Segami

KAGETORA
カゲトラ

#43 Report to Mother

Ouch...!

Be a man. Don't be whining over this.
Here. Done!

Ow...
PAT

...I guess he held back a bit.
Of course.

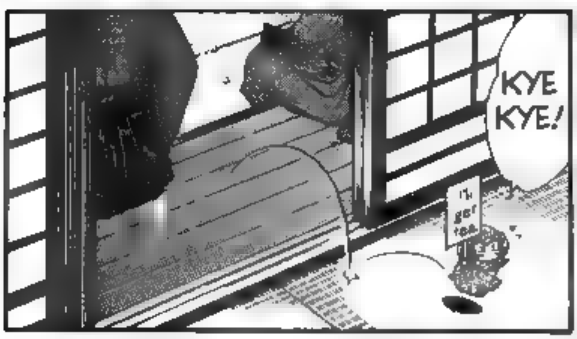
But...to have a fight with Kagetora and only have that much...you should consider yourself lucky.
Your teeth are fine too.

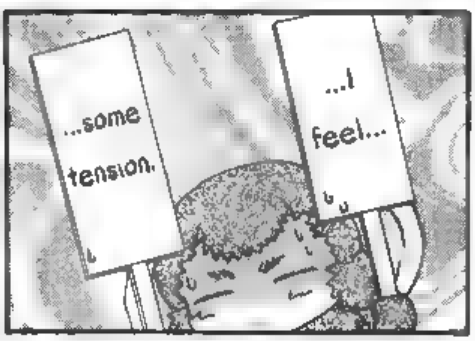
Thanks...
It's just a consolation prize.
That's all

.....
I can't... win...
...Don't say scary things like that...
If he slugged you with all he's got, your mouth would probably be busted like hell.
I'm sure.

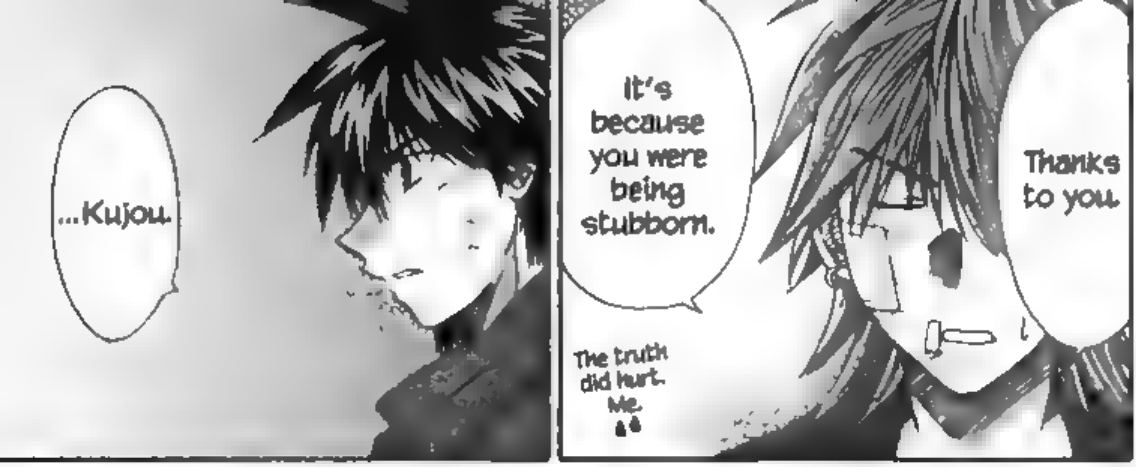
Huh?
TURN 3
But I won't take care of you if you get hurt.
Talk it out, man-to-man.

Master...
Oh...


KYE KYE!


...some tension.
...I feel...

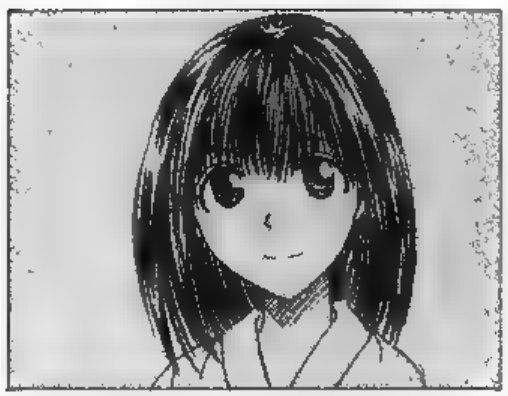
WHISPER
You look horrible.


...Kujou.
It's because you were being stubborn.
Thanks to you.
The truth did hurt. Me.

...quit running away.
I think I'll...

Master...

Someone...



I see...
.....

It's not for my position.
But for someone more important...

I can't say I'm a disciple anymore, right?
I messed up a lot...

Ku-jou?

Master...
It was a short period, but I thank you.

Er...
.....
You are the worst disciple.
You said rude things, you punched me.
And you also addressed me without honorifics.
That's true
...You did do a lot.
And I can't just leave a fledgling like that out on his own.
...And you are my disciple.
Huh...

...

ストン
Then you can train me more.

There's no going back now.
Be ready for it.

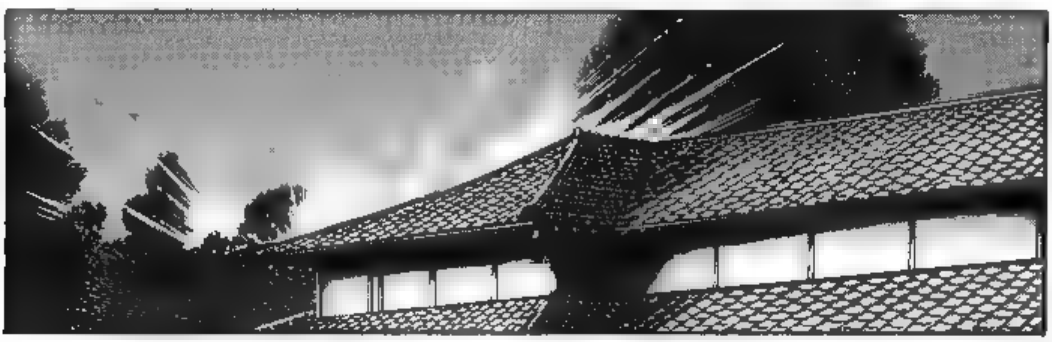
Drink this. It's sweet sake.
KYE KYE.
Oh.
Kosuke...
Thanks.

I see...
RUFFLE
Heh.
Disciple, eh?

That's because I was not expecting it.
I did get one shot at you.
But don't you think this training helped me so far?
...would come at me like that.
Geez.
I never thought that a disciple...
I guess ninjas put their guard down too.
Never knew.
Then I shall...
...train you harder than ever.
Until you hurl.
I guess that's true!
HA HA HA
I see.
...Win?
I'll train harder.
Next time I hope I can win without tricks.

Master...
Be nice.
Ack, don't be a wimp!
Mod-eration? What's that?
Uh...well, I think moderation is best in anything, so...
Huh?
Huh?
CLAMOR
CLAMOR
.....
Guys are so simple sometimes.
...but I guess they made up?
How fast.
I thought they were... fighting just before...
I wonder what they're talking about.

Just leave them alone.
They are having fun either way.
A ninja disciple usually goes through...
Yeah, but...
...to normal people, that's torture!
Yeah.
That's true.



Hey, Kujou. Wake up.
Uhm...
Yeah...
チュン CHIRP
チュン CHIRP
.....
Morn-ing...

YAWN...
What nice weather...
It's a nice day to tell her how you feel, no?
Heh heh.
Wha—
COUGH
You are, right?
You said you're gonna stop running away.
Are you still hesitating about this!?
No...
Of course, I'm already decided...
I guess...
...just because you tell her, it doesn't mean she feels the same way.
WHISPER
.....
Gee whiz.
But I have a lot to think about too...
WHISPER
!!
Hey!
LOOM
Did I say something bad!?
That's true, though.
Why are you so depressed now!?
I was preoccupied with other things...
...and wasn't thinking about that.

Master... you're a ninja, you're strong.
I think you're on the good-looking side too.
But with regards to love, you suck.
GAH!
Er...
Come on!
Be a man, Kagetora!!
STRETCH
Agaga
Master...
...Honorifics.
...What are you doing?
Hime.
Well... we're not really doing anything...
Hey, go ahead and tell her!
No way! I can't say it here.
Not in front of people, either.
WHISPER

I am "oyakume."
The situation's not that simple.

.....
WHISPER
It's about guts!
That's easy to say.
WHISPER

Hey.
Let me go!
GRAB
Geez, you're thinking too much.

Whoa!
You got me!
TWIST
Don't think you can treat your master like that.

.....

Not a chance.
Oh.
No way.
IN UNISON
You're not fighting, right?

I'm glad...
I'm glad you're smiling again, Toudou...
Huh?
No...it's nothing.
I'm going to go home.
スタ
PIT PAT
スタ
Kujou...
Oh.
Toudou!

Thanks for letting me stay!
I won't live here anymore... but I'll stay as your disciple.
So... I'll see you at training!
Ka-getora...
You let him become your disciple?
Yes.
.....

BA-DUM
Hime...
You're so nice, Kagetora...
GIGGLE

"Hime" or... "oyakume."
...it might mean I'll give up my "oyakume" duty.
If I tell her...

I have somewhere I want to go.
Can you come with me?
Hime...
Huh?
What?
...Maybe...
...I can decide if I go there.

To Hoorai Village...

Wow, it's been awhile.
For me too.

Are you happy to be back?
I guess so.
This is my starting point.

Oh.
Hey. How are you?
Oh!
RUSTLE
RUSTLE
It's Kagetora-dono!

.....

Whoa.
Yah!
CLANK
GIGGLE
They're cute.
You think?
Ha ha
CLANK

...I see. Then train hard, okay?
I'm going to become an "oyakume" just like you!
Okay!
Me too!

You did too?
Of course.

They train, even at that age?

They all grow up like that.
If you're born into this village, yes.

...every day with my peers.
I dreamt of becoming "oyakume."
And trained...
That's right...
That's how I came to be...
Kagetora, why did we come here suddenly?
Oh, to visit my mother.

Let's first head to my home.
Okay.
Okay.
I needed...
...to tell mother something.
Today, Kagetora seems...
I wonder what he needs to say...
to his mother.
It's unusual for you to come home unexpectedly.
Kagetora.
...different than usual...

I thought I should pay mother a visit.
I see. That's fine, but...
...why can't you let us know you're coming beforehand?
Always.
PINCH
Ow ow ow ow ow!

Especially if Hime-sama is accompanying you.
We have preparations to make...
Oh... please don't be bothered by me.

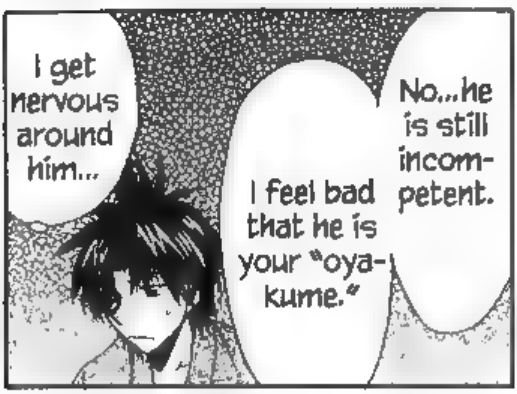
We cannot do that.
You are the hime-sama of Toudou.
We have our responsibilities as the Kazama household.
Ow...
It was me who asked her suddenly to come here.
...That's why...

What are you doing in the middle of the hall?
Big brother.
Ow...
...I'm saying this is all your fault.
TWIST
From the start.
Owww!!
Hime-san doesn't know what to do.
That's true.
TWIST
Owwww
TWIST
WRDDA
WADDA
But it's perfect timing.
We were just about to send for you.
GASP
The back room? Is it...
Oh...can you join him too?
?
Yes?
Huh?
For me?
Phew, he finally let go.
He's waiting for you in the back room.

You probably do not remember me, but...
...it has been awhile.
I am the head of the Kazama household, Tenshu of Hoorai.

Thank you very much...
...for taking care of my stupid son.
Have I... met you before?
I'm sorry but I don't remember...
It was when you were small.
No problem.
No...
I'm serious.
You grew up to be a lovely young lady.
It was father.
I didn't think he'd be home today...of all days.
Stupid son

I saw this coming...
UGH
Unlike my stupid son.


I get nervous around him...
I feel bad that he is your "oya-kume."
No...he is still incom-petent.

Kagetora always helps me.
That is not true.

all he said was "Don't get cheeky."
Even when I got the "oyakume" duty,
He never praised me, even when I was younger.

It's been a long time since they spoke.
Many years.
I knew it. He can't fight back at all.
.....

I don't like him much either.
Taka-ou...
to come home when father is here.
But Kagetora has bad timing...

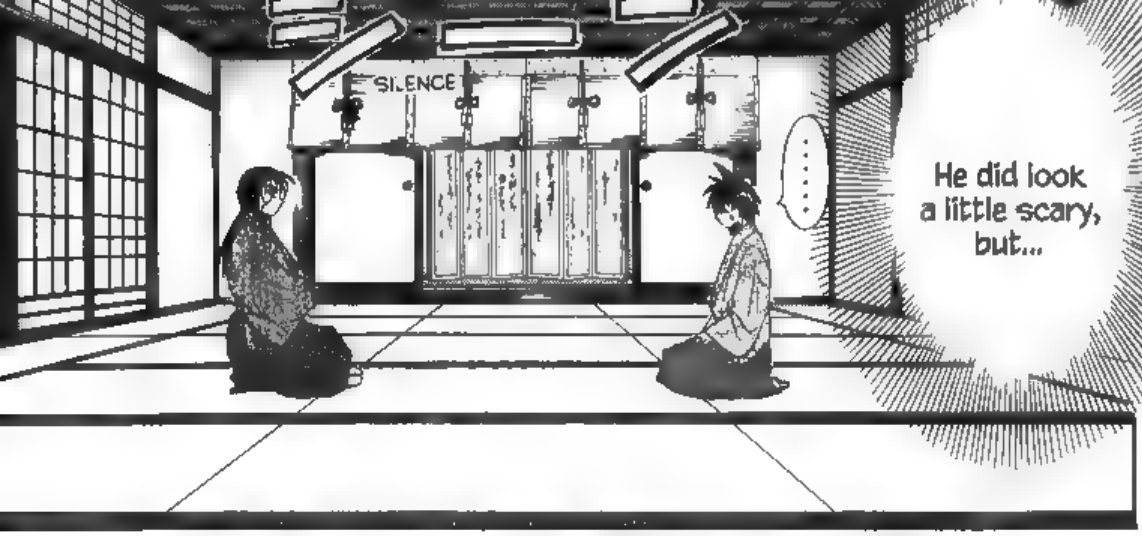
Excuse me!
SLIDE
SIGH
I guess I should go help.
Here goes.

I'm saved.
PHEW
Oh... thank you.

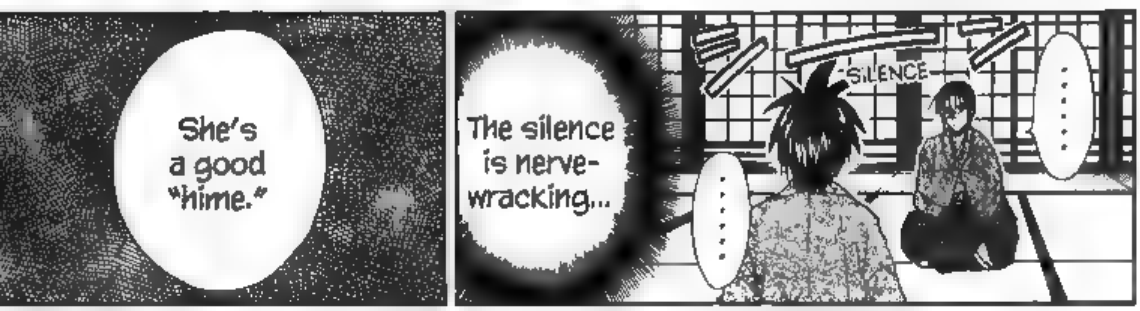
The bath is ready, so maybe you should relax?
Hime-sama should be tired.

This way, Hime-sama.
Kagetora
You stay.

I need to talk to you.
Huh?
You purposely left them alone, eh?
That's what you call help?
You actually hurt him.
See you later.
SLIDE!
Taka brother!
No worries, she has me.
But I should stay with Hime...
How evil.
He was helping himself..
SMILE
If Kagetora deals with him, I don't have to, right?
I don't want to have to talk to father.
I wonder if he doesn't get along with Tenshu-san?
Ka-getora...


SILENCE
He did look a little scary, but...

Yes... well... good...
Kagetora... how's your duty going?


She's a good "hime."
The silence is nerve-wracking...
SILENCE

She has strong eyes.
I'm sure your "oyakume" is going well because it's her.
Huh?

since you're here, I'll work hard!!
Kagetora...

Because it was "hime," I was...
That's right...

Now my life is...
I was able to accomplish my duty.
Father, it's as you say.
Because Yuki-dono was the "hime,"

...solely here for Hime.
...You have a man's face now.
Huh?
PAT

Kureha is probably relieved.
RUFFLE
She was the one person who believed you would become "oyakume."
Keep working hard.
Mother...
That was unexpected.
Didn't think father would praise me.
TAP..

If you do, one day...
you can become a strong ninja who can protect hime-sama.
Be a man with strong spirits.
So you can keep smiling even if you are in pain.

I am...

I wonder...
...what Kagetora and Tenshu-san are talking about.

That's how I came to be...
That's right...
.....
I needed...
...to tell mother something.
GULP
Takaou-san!
It's bothering me now...
I wonder...

Huh?
Wasn't he waiting for you outside?
Yes. And, um...
...where's Kagetora?
Oh, Hime-sama, you're out.
Oh...
He finished talking to father long ago.
I thought he went back to you...
Maybe he's...
SWISH
Kazama Family Grave

It's been a long time.
Mother...
today I came to...
...tell you something...

It's been a long time.
Mother...
Kazama Family Grave
today I came to...
...tell you something...

KAGETORA
カゲトラ

#44 I Love You!

You want to become "oyakume"?
You can do it.
I believe in you.
Mother...
I'll become an "oyakume"! I promise!
I'm very sorry...

Oh...
LOOKING AROUND
He was here, after all.
Ka...
Mother.

I think...I will retire from being Hime's "oyakume."

I was happy when I became "oyakume."
I was able to fulfill my promise to you, and mostly, it was my dream.
But I can't be "oyakume" anymore.
RUSTLE
Hime!?
Why are you here?
Kazama Family Grave
TURN
!

Ka-
getora...
You're not going to be my "oyakume" anymore?
Uh... um...
Actu-
ally...
GASP
...uh...
DRIP
DRIP

Is it my fault?
SQUEEZE
DASH
Hime!?
You're training me in martial arts...
...but I don't get better.
So... you got sick of me?
Then... why?
No way!!
Uh...
...Fine.

Forget it!
DASH
TUG!
Hime!
If I stayed your "oyakume,"
I couldn't say this...
BA-DUM

I love you.

Not as an "oyakume."
But as a guy...
Are you okay!?
.....
Hime!?
ぺた
SLUMP
She might not feel the same way.
は
GASP

It's just like Kujou said...
Um, Hime...you can forget what I just said...
...I won't.
Huh!?
I don't know what to say, Hime, but...
I do too.
WHOOSH
I love you too, Kagetora.

Huh...?

Uh...
きょろ
FOOZY
Um...
きょろ
WOOZY

Hime... really?
コクン
NOD

PINCH
.....

!!
SST
Are you okay!?
BA-DUM

Ow!
Kagetora!?

BOGONK
Ow!
WOBBLE
I'm I'm I'm okay...
WOOSH
I guess it wasn't a dream...
STING
STING
Ouch.
er...
GOOONG
Ka-getora!
.....
It's real...
I see...
GIGGLE
It's real...

I still can't believe it...
But if it's true...
...then I really have to retire from my duty.
Why!?
Being "oya-kume" means...
...we are master and servant.
An "oyakume" who is in love with his master cannot be forgiven.
Then...I only have two options.
To stop being a ninja or not...
Stop...
...being a ninja!?
Let's return to my house.
I need to talk to my father...
That's the only way.
SST
But...
Hime.

RUSTLE
RUSTLE
RUSTLE
Ka-getora!

Long time no see. ♪
Sakuya-chan...

There you are, Yuki-chan.

...be-cause the Toudou hime-sama is here.
I was asked by Tenshu-sama to take care...

Some-thing bothering you?
What's wrong? You look down.
.....
Cuz you know, there are only men in this house.
So...
Sakuya-chan...
Did you ever consider quitting being a ninja?
Huh!? There's no way.
For me, it's been decided from the day I was born.
I've never thought of it.
Then...what happens if you quit?
You really can't that easily, but
if you do, you can never come back here.
Why!?
Of course.
An outcast ninja can't return to the vil-lage.

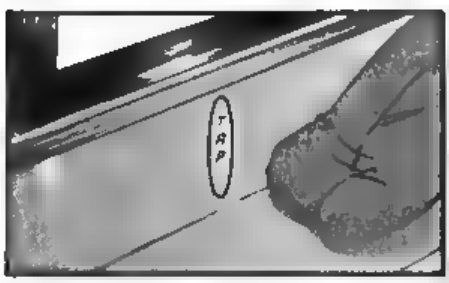
Are they...
"Kazama Cherry Blossoms?"
Look at the pretty flowers! Come on! These are cherry blossoms in the winter!
I don't understand, but cheer up!
so in order to always have stock, the cherry blossoms for Kazama are grown at different times than the others.
We have specific periods to retrieve the tree skin,
That's right. They are the only ones that bloom during the winter.
Kureha-san...
...would be sad if Kagetora quit being a ninja, right?
...when he told me about Kureha-san, he spoke of the cherry blossoms...
Last time...
Who told you?
But I didn't think you knew about it.
That's right... Kureha-sama loved these blossoms...
Since this winter is going to be colder than usual, we made them bloom a bit early.

Can you tell me more about it?
Are you referring to Tora!?
All this ninja talk...
What!?
Wait...
I'm sure she will...
Yeah...
I don't know...
Hmm.
I don't even know how to bring it up...
...I'm getting nervous.
...When it comes down to the moment...
.....

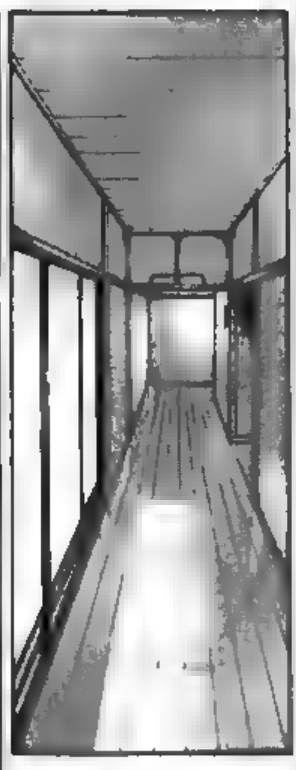
BA-DUM BA-DUM
Oh...
Big brother...
Nothing, really...
!!
What are you doing?
Wandering around like that.
FLINCH
If you need something, you should just go in and get it over with.
Once there, he'll stay a long time.
Or else, you don't know when you'll see him again.
He'll be out on duty again soon.
!!!
Huh?
You want to talk to father?
He's not there.
I saw him going into the *butsuma*.
Thanks.
Yeah.
You're so quiet, it's creepy.
Sick...
...Are you sick or something?

Yeah.
Butsuma then, huh?
I'll go there then.

It's nothing.


TAP

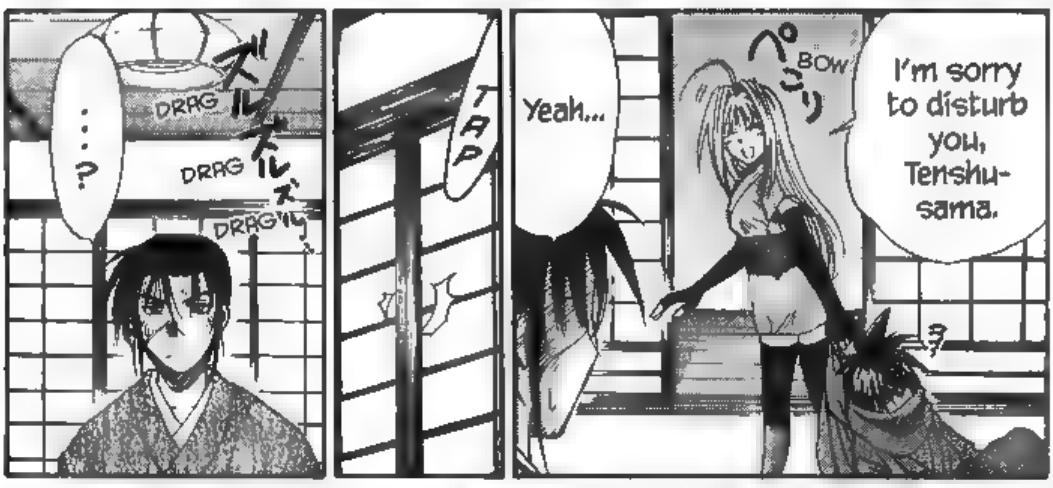
I feel his presence inside...



.....

You want to talk to me?
If you need something, come in.
...Kagetora?
BRUSH
...Right!
GLARE!
I love you too...
BA-DUM
BA-DUM
BA-DUM
Starting today, I would like to quit—
Father!
SLIDE

Hoorai style, art of the ninja, Lightning Strike!!
BZZZZT!
!?


DRAG
ズル
DRAG
ズル
DRAG
ズル
…?
TAP
I'm sorry to disturb you, Tenshu-sama.
BOW
ペコリ
Yeah...

I had something important to say to father!
What are you saying?
I'm glad I made it.
Phew.

THUMP
!?
Why don't you get it!?
How did you...
I heard it from Yuki-chan.
Important? That you're going to quit "oya-kume"?
it's harder for her to make the guy she likes...
...suffer like this!
I don't want you to suffer.
But...
Ka-getora...
Hime...
...er...

If that's the case...
...why don't you keep it secret?
If you guys go out secretly, then there's no problem, right?
That's why you should keep it a secret. Right?
Huh?
But to keep lying to master and father...
...that's a little... no, it's really hard...
You're scared?
I see.
Well, I guess that can't be helped.
What a wimp...

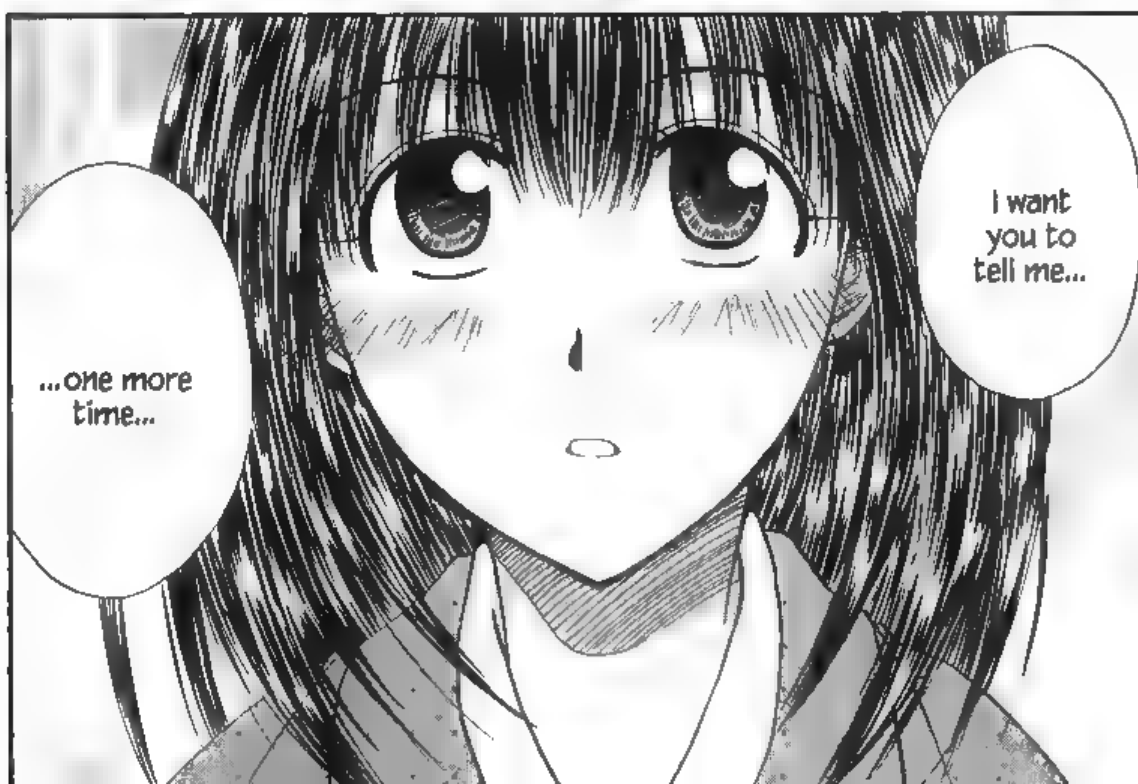
Ka-getora...
.....
Tenshu-sama is pretty strict.
If he finds out, you'll be dis-owned.
Or...he might say it's criminal and make you commit ritual suicide.
How scary...
URGH
It's for Yuki-chan, but you can't put your life on the line?
You're such a weak man.
Yuki-chan, you should reconsider this guy.
He can't protect the girl he likes with his life.
Right?
Huh...?
...No!
I...if it's for Hime...
...I can lie, and...
...also protect her with everything I have.

TURN
Then it's up to you two.
Tora.
It looks like you're mentally prepared.
...Okay.
HUGGY
Oh...
TURN
...Best wishes.
My good luck present!
Hee hee.
Saku...
Sakuya! ...Thanks a lot.

Sigh...
WAVE
WAVE
Oh well...
This makes my broken heart official...
So I guess it's okay...
Tora and Yuki-chan looked happy.
SMILE
GLANCE
Hime and I are together...
I didn't even think of keeping it secret.
...Geez.
I know!

SQUEEZE
Oh...
Hi...Hime! We should return too.

Um...I have a favor to ask.
What is it?
Hime?


I want you to tell me...
...one more time...

No?
Sure.
WOOOSH
Hime...

I love you a lot...

Me...
...too...
ぽす
THUMP
Don't kiss...
...another girl ever again.
That was...
WADDA あわ
The only person...
あわ WADDA
And...
...one more favor...

...who can kiss you is me...
...Uh...
Ka-getora...
Oh...
WOOSH...
SQUEEZE

ドクン
BA-DUM
ドクン
BA-DUM
ドクン
BA-DUM
SST...
Hime...

Tora/ Yuki-chan!
Hey!
Shouldn't you guys head back soon?
Then let's get going!
Hide your lovey-dovey selves!
Lovey...
This is my last prank on them.
.....
<3
GIGGLE...
Let's go back.
Yeah...
Huh?
Something wrong?
No way!
It's nothing!!
NOD NOD

I love you.
I love you too.
Not as "oyakume."
But as a guy...
Hime...

...a dream...
Oh...
...uh!!
WAKE UP
...isn't a dream, right?
But telling her that...
Right... I'm still in Hoorai...
!?
What the..
Why are you so red?
Do you have a fever?
FLINCH
I love you...
...too...

#45 First Date

Kagetora.

He went to visit the grave.
Takaou.

Where did he go so early?

To mother's?
I thought he went yesterday.

He has his reasons.

Why would he need to take Hime-sama?
Who knows?

Looks like he took Hime-san too.
He wants to say bye before he goes back to Tokyo.

...I see...
Reasons, eh?

Mother.
I'm returning to Tokyo.
Kazama Family Grave
But I want to share something with you before I go.

I...am "oyakume," but...
...I love...
..."Hime" a lot.

...I wanted...
...you to know...
Kazama
Hime said she feels the same way.
We can't say this to anybody yet, but...
Mother.
I'll come again.
Kagetora, here...
Thanks.
...be out in the open about our relationship.
...I hope we can...
The next time we come...

Okay!
.....
Oh, wait.
Let's head home.
Okay.
I'll catch up.
Then I'll take my time.
Can you go ahead?
?
That's no problem...
Kureha-san...
RUSTLE
RUSTLE

I'm sorry.
He's such an honest person...
...so lying must be hard for him.
But that time...
For making...
...Kagetora...
lie for me...
I...if it's for Hime...
...I can lie, and...
...also protect her with everything I have.
I felt the same way.

No matter what happens...
...I'll stay...
...with Kagetora forever.
So I'm sorry.
BOW
Kazama Family Grave
.....
I'll come again!
Kazama
Next time...I'll come with Kagetora!

I'll be waiting.
Yes.
RUSTLE
RUSTLE
Kazama Family Grave
Yes...

You're done?
Yeah! I did what I had to do.
Thanks for waiting.
PIT PA
PAT PA
Hime.
SST
What did you and mother talk about?
Umm...
It's a secret!
Hee hee.
SQUEEZE
Let's go!
Yes.

WOOSH!
Kagetora.
There you are.
That's what's planned...
...I hear you're going back today.
...Is something wrong?
Uh, it's nothing.
BA-DUM
BA-DUM
And you came home at a perfect time too...
Huh?
Brother Taka...
You haven't been home for a while. You should stay longer.
TOUCHED

.....
Takaou, you're thinking out loud.
When he comes home, he tries to act fatherly and it's annoying... Geez.
WHISPER
If you take some of father's time, I'll have to deal with him less...
Kagetora's the offering...
WHISPER
Offering?

That's what I told mother.
Th-that's right!

Kagetora has "oyakume," so he has to go back.
Right?

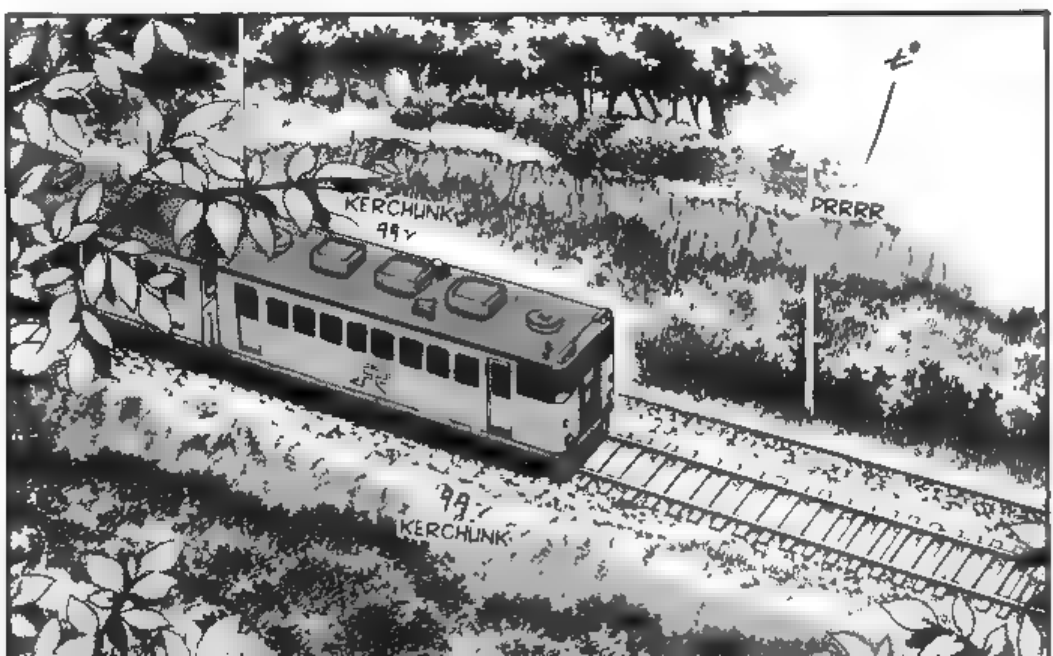
...Get over it...
.....
I see...
He can say what he wants.
It's fine. I usually don't listen to whatever father says...

There are people here who are alert.
So we should head back to Tokyo as soon as possible.

I feel sorry for brother Taka, but...
I can't stay here in the village for so long.

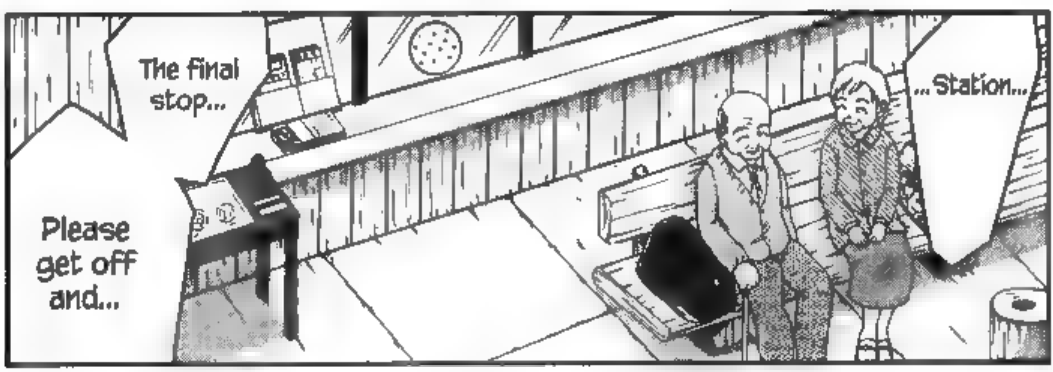
Thanks for your hospitality.
We'll come again soon.
BOW
Huh? Okay.
Okay then! We're going back now.
Yeah?
Sort of...
Hmm...
...the way they act is different from before?
Hey... don't you think...
.....
I can see from the look on your face you don't want to see him.
.....
Didn't you have something to turn in to our father?
Let them be.
Well, they're not kids.

I think I know...
...what Kagetora had to say to you.
Mother...
Geez.
I don't know why I have to do it.
STOMP
STOMP
Just like you...
But...I'll keep quiet and watch over them.


KERCHUNK
KERCHUNK
PRRRR

I think we can get back to Tokyo by afternoon...
TAP...
That's true.
YAWN
Hoorai is pretty far...
ZZZZZ
Oh.
She fell asleep.
ZZZ, ZZZ
Oh, this seat's open...
Aw, how cute.
GIGGLE

Little lovers.


The final stop...
...Station...
Please get off and...

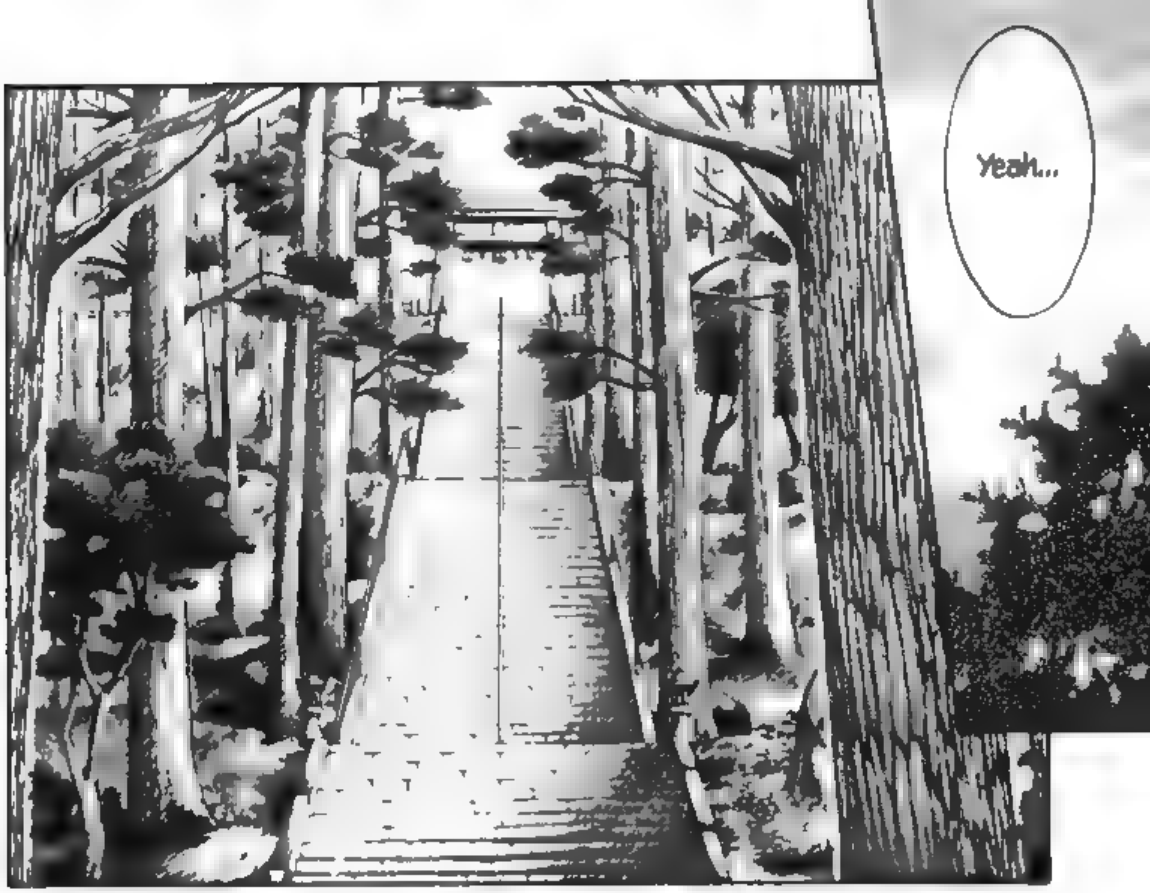
Let's look around first!
Yeah?
Town Guide Places to see
We have a lot of time until the next train...
Togakushi Station
I'm sorry.
I fell asleep too.

FOOT BATH
SPRINGS ONSEN
Oh!
Look, a foot bath.
Let's try it!
Oh...
ちゃぷ
SPLASH
We just dip our feet in.
We can go farther in too.
This feels pretty good.
Kagetora

There's a chair here too.
For two people.
Let's sit.
...Sure.
SPLASH
SPLASH

GLANCE
.....
That's true.
This feels good.
Nice and warm.
Huh!?
What's wrong?
Oh, um, yeah...
I was thinking it's like we're on a date.
SQUEEZE
!
BA-DUM

Because I'm out with someone I like.
It is.
Ka-getora.
I have one more place I want to see.
One more?
SMILE
Hime...


Yeah...

You wanted to come to a shrine, Hime?
Yeah.
It was in the guide.

What are they known for?
...Um...
It's supposedly famous.
It's a good shrine.
...Match-making...
.....
Yup.
Then I guess we have to pray.

Let's go.
Hime and I, alone together.
It's because we're in an unknown place that we can spend time like this...
That's the main temple.
Without having to worry about other people's eyes.
Hurry, hurry!
That's right...
Oh.
It's omikuji.
Let's try it.
OMIKUJI
...this is what...
...you call happiness...

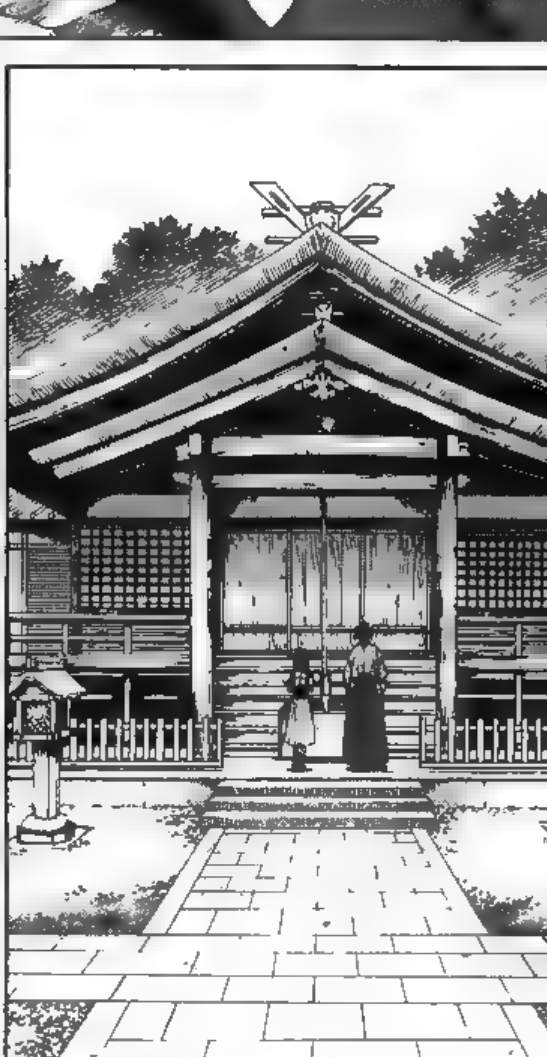
Oh, I'm so nervous.
I'll get depressed if I draw "bad fortune" when I'm happy like this.
You're not doing it?
Not for me.
!
PEEK
BA-DUM BA-DUM
Hime... how was it?
.....
TA-DA!
Good fortune!
It says my love luck is good too.
Omikuji
Good Fortune
I'll take it home and keep it for good luck.
OMIKUJI
Now we should go to the main shrine.

CLANG
CLANG

.....

...

You were praying a long time.
Hime...
Yeah?

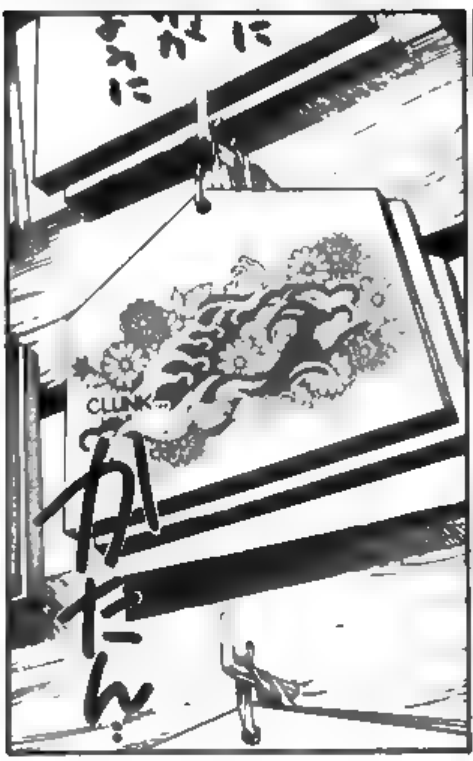


...Heh...
Ha...
I was asking for a favor, that's why.
I asked him to work hard because I'll work hard too!
GRIP!
Bwa...
Ha ha ha ha!
Huh? Why are you laughing!?
...Well... because...
...I never heard anyone telling God to work hard.
It's weird.
I thought... I saw a different side of you.
...Hee hee.
I'm going to go write an *ema*!
DASH
だっ
Oh...
I...I didn't know you laughed so much either.
You're laughing too much!

I guess I overdid it.
Oops.
It was really funny.

You can just stay there and laugh!
Bleh

Don't come here!!
Hime... I'm sorry.


CLUNK
カたん

Okay!

Hime! I'm really sorry.
If you hate me for this, I...
オロ
PANIC
オロ
PANIC
Is she seriously mad!?
SHOOT
What did you wish for?
I'm not telling you.
I'm not telling...
for *now*.
PHEW
I'm glad.
I thought you started to hate me.
Then I'll tell you.
Huh?
For now?
When it comes true, let's come again.

I can't hate someone...
...I love this much.
That...
...will never happen.

Me too.
I can't help...
...loving you, Hime.
Hime...

You're right.
Same as me.

Let's come again.
Promise?
Yes...

We're back.
Yeah...

Once we pass this entrance...
...we're going to start...
...pretending we're master and servant...

Hey, Kagetora...

Don't worry.
We might have a lot of obstacles...
but we'll go through them together.
...That's true.
If it's for you...
...I'll do anything, Hime.
Yeah...

Kagetora.
Let's go home.
Yes...

KAGETORA
カゲトラ

#46 Another Person

Fallen leaves...
Autumn is almost over.
WOOSH
WOOSH
WOOSH
.....
A lot happened this month...

I can't hate someone I love so much.
It's a date.
I'm with someone I like.
We're really a couple now.
Although the reality hasn't set in yet...
WOOSH
You've let down your guard ever since you came back from the village!!
KYE!
What are you doing!?
KYE KYE!
Owww...
Burned stick!
THUD!
KYE KYE!
Ouch!!

KYE.
KYE!
That... that's not true.
I'm the same.
JUMP

Ugh.
TWITCH

Of course, because we're keeping it a secret.

...Guard down or whatever.
Ever since we've been back, we hardly get any time alone.

KYE KYE!!
You're hiding some-thing.

KYEEEE!
VWOOSH VWOOSH
If you're in the way, I'm going to sweep you too.
Here, here.
VWOOSH

Kosuke...
: STARE...
KYE?
Tell me.
I feel bad, but I shouldn't tell Kosuke yet.

Hime!
PINCH
...What are you doing?
I was just sweeping the yard...
Oh, are you busy?
Not at all.
Did you need something?
Sort of.
I wanted to do our homework together.
Is that okay?
Of course.
.....

...So if you interpret it like this...
Oh. Right...
.....
.....
KYE?
What?
...I can't say anything that'll give it away...
If I worry about not letting Kosuke know...
!
GLANCE
Even if I get to spend time with Hime, this is sad...

SLIDE
KYE KYE.
Kosuke! Can you go buy tea leaves?
I think we're out of tea we can serve to Hime.
The high quality one.
Tea, eh?
KYE!
....
You didn't tell Kosuke yet?
...Phew.
....
Sorry to cause you trouble.
No problem.
But I thought I should wait.
Someday I will.
Hime...
I'm just happy we can be together.

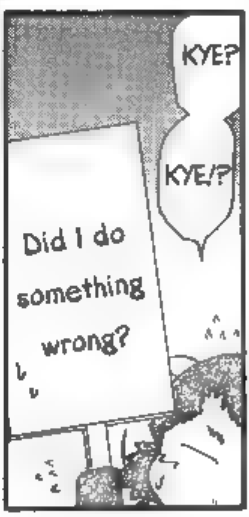
BA-DUM!
I'm back with tea.
!!
Oh.
That's very considerate of you.
Ha ha ha
I had bought them when you were gone.
KYE!
BA-DUM
BA-DUM
Why are you so fast?
KYE
I'm sure this time he'll take a bit longer.
Can you go buy something!?
Oh! Shoot! I forgot to ask you for snacks.
THROW
I was surprised.
My heart is still thumping.
Haha... that was weird.

スパーン!!
SLIDE
Why are you so fast!?
Here you go!
KYE KYE!

Actually, figure it out.
Come on.
KYE?
Now if you would just figure out what's going on, it'll be great.
Ha ha ha

You're very well prepared today.
I see...
I bought it for you to take tomorrow.

Kagetora, I'm going back to my room.
GIGGLE GIGGLE
Don't worry.
It's not your fault, Kosuke.
SST


KYE?
KYE!?
Did I do something wrong?

WHISPER
We can...
...see each other every day anyway.
...Besides.
TIP TOE
Huh? But...
We finished most of the homework.

HEE HEE

Did everything go well with Hime?
WOOSH
KYE!
TUG
TUG
KYE KYE...
Huh? What?
See each other every day...
.....
I'll see you later.
PIT PAT
Yes.

There's no way...
Huh!?
Just kidding. You don't.
KYE KYE.
WOOSH
You twitch your nose when you lie.
What are you talking about?
KYE.
We've been together so long.
KYE!
I can tell no matter what!
Kosuke... you tricked me, eh?
Kosuke...
WHACK
KYE KYE!
Ow!?
I am your ninja monkey. I won't do anything that'll harm you!!
You don't have to hide it from me!!
KYE!!
Why are you hitting me!?
KYE KYE!

Huh?
The future.
KYE KYE.
By the way, if you're going out with Hime,
what are you planning to do in the future?
KYE?
That's right. I'm sorry.
It's good you understand!
RUFFLE
.....
The future, eh?
Career/School Options
1st Choice
2nd Choice

I just got it now.
He said I was the only one who didn't turn it in yet.
Career/ School Options sheet? Why do you have that now?
.....
I'm going to college.
If I get in, that is.
Me?
I can't believe you didn't fill it out.
What are you doing?
Of course. Everyone's already decided by this point.
Sort of.
What to do?
Are you guys decided too?
...take over my family business.
Which is?
Uh, I will...
How about you?
I think I can make it because I have recommendations.
I see.
I'm going to a technical school for stylists.

I'm sorry I asked...
So the burden fell on me.
Sigh
My older brother was supposed to take over, but suddenly he said he wanted to be in a band, and left home.
I'll never forgive him for this.
A temple.
What are you doing?
Career path.
Me?
WHISPER
He'll cross-dress and go in.
But if Yuki-chan is going to a girls' school...
WHISPER
WHISPER
That's a little...
They have wild imaginations.
Is that a career?
You already have a career. "Ninja," right?
Isn't it protecting Yuki-chan?
Career path...

What I'm going to do?
Huh?
I wonder what Hime's doing...
Huh? Isn't that Aki-chan over there?
At the gates.
So she was thinking about it...
I haven't decided where to go yet, though.
I think I'm going to college.
Hmm.
Uh...no, not exactly...
Are you waiting for someone?
Heeeey.
Oh.
Aki-chan!

Kujou!?
Sorry I'm late!
Oh...
Waiting for Kujou-san? You mean... huh?
Really?
.....
Yeah, that's the situation.
But something like that.
Well, it's nothing serious.
At first I thought she was scary.
But once I got to know her, she's pretty cute...
Heh heh
When did you...
Whaaat!?

Yeah.
Sorry...
Owww.
You talk too much.
Idiot.
Gah!
THUD
My rib cage!
Okay
See you.
Yuki! See you tomorrow.
Okay, we're going!
But they make a cute couple.
I know.
They look happy.
Wow, that was a surprise.
I'm sorry
...they can go out in the open.
I'm jealous that...
That's true...

Hopefully one day we can be like that too...
I don't know what to do...
But for that to happen...
...ra...
I never thought beyond becoming an "oyakume."
.....
Ka-getora!!

Yes.
That's good, but...
...if there is something, let me know.
No...it's nothing.
Really?
Hime...
Whoa...
What's wrong? You're dazed out.
I'm done.
I know I can't do much to help, but...
MUMBLE
MUMBLE
RUFFLE
Hmm.
Hime...
So...

ぱっ!
I'm sorry! I just...
Oh...
Oh.
ぱしっ
GRAB
Hime?
Um... You know?
Oh... then...
...excuse me...
I kind of... liked that...

Hee hee
It tickles...
GENTLY
RUFFLE
BR-
DUM...
SLIDE
Hime...

Mom?
Was I supposed to train with you?
Master!?
Is something wrong?

Get ready..
Sorry to interrupt, Kagetora.
Oh, of course not.

I thought it would be nice for a change.
Yuki, get ready.

But it really is unusual
for master to come during my training.

Yah!
I wonder if she has anything on her mind?

GLARE
Hm...
You need to keep attack-ing.
SLAP
SLAP
PANG
Yah!
WOOOSH
Good job!

FLOAT
Oh...
DODGE
!?
Ouch!
THUD!
I thought I almost had it.
URRG
...Yes.
That hurt...
Too easy.

Huh!?
That was pretty good.
For mom to praise me like this...
...is very unusual.
.....
Kagetora.

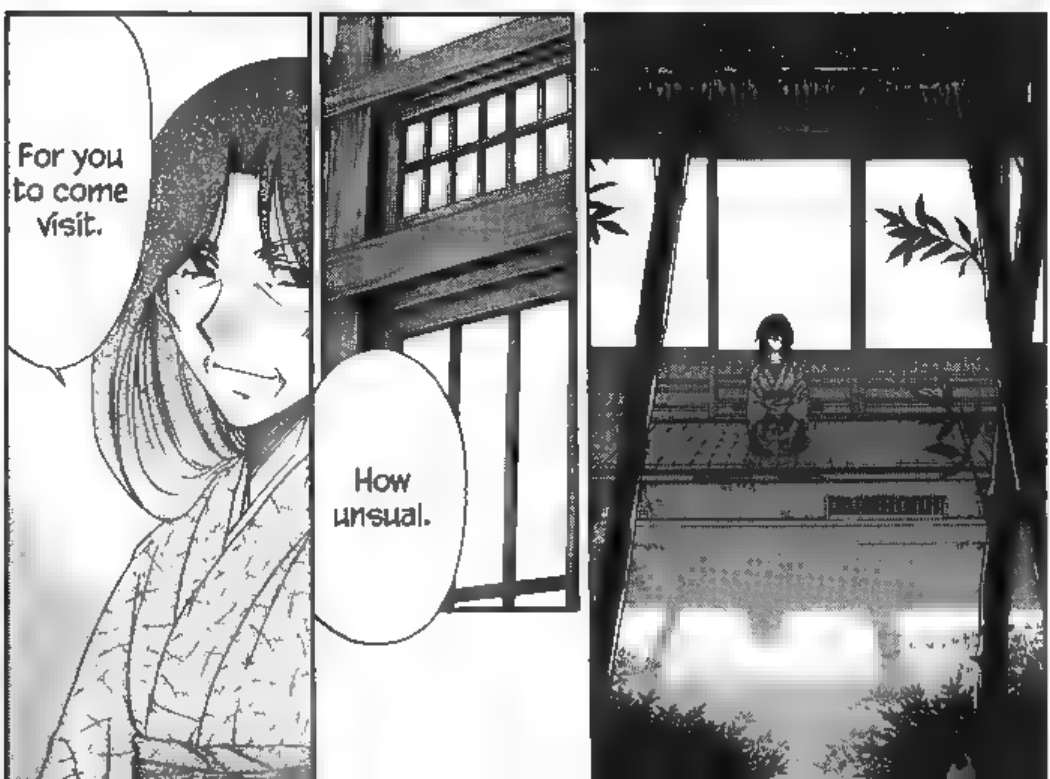
You're doing a good job.
She's still not good, but much better than before.
Yes!
Yes!
Thank you very much, ma'am.

But it is mostly Hime's hard work.
I only helped a little.
But I was able to work hard because of Kagetora.
.....

I have to go out.
Kagetora, please handle it from here.
Just say it was the work of both.
Huh? Mom, where are you going?
Yes, ma'am!
I'll be late.
PIT PAT
ZWISH
TAP
Wow, that scared me.
It was sudden.
I was nervous.
I thought she figured out our relation-ship...
But she didn't say any-thing.

It's thanks to you!
Yeah!
I'm so happy she praised me.
I'm happy for you too.
Even mom praised you!
That's not true!
I didn't do much.
I'll get better and surprise mom.
Let's train!
TURN
I should train harder.
I'm feeling fired up now!
GRIP!
And when you get praised, I get happy.

Yes.
Come on, hurry!
Nothing!
Huh?


For you to come visit.
How unsual.

I wanted to talk to you.
Saya.
And what is it?
.....
Good work.
Thanks.
This is water.
Phew, I'm tired.
STRETCH

Phew.
I guess mom isn't home yet.
I guess not. She's a busy person.
Oh! Then I'll make dinner tonight.
Let's eat together!
I'll make your favorite dishes.
TOUCHED
I finally feel like we're a couple...
Let's see.
I'll light-fry some pota-toes...
Yes
And...
!

There's someone outside...
ZWISH
Huh?
CLUNK
CLUNK
CLAARNG
I see.
You're pretty good.

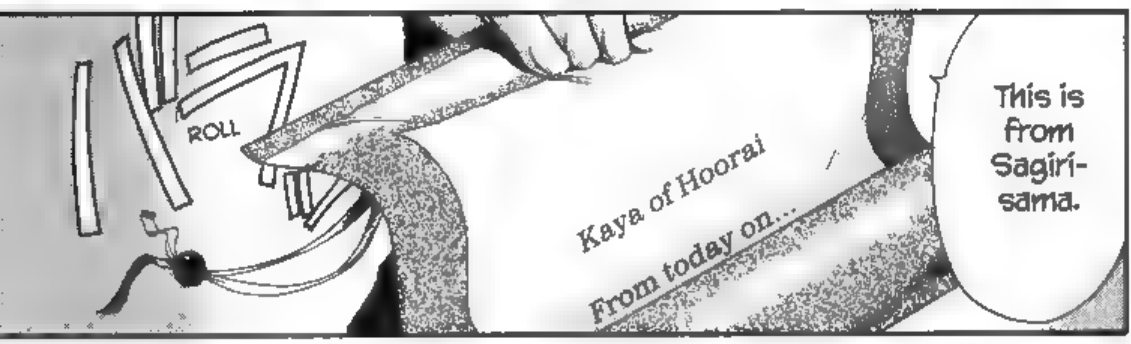
ZWISH
You're...
Do you remember me?

I've seen you at the village.
I believe you're with Sagiri-sama.
Your memory is good too.
Kagetora? Is it a visitor?
Oh...
!
TAP
Nice to meet you, Hime-sama.

I am one of the kunoichi who protects Sagiri-sama...
My name is Kaya, I am a kunoichi of Hoorai.

I knew it.
But not any-more.
Grand-ma's?
Yes.

.....
SST
You mean, you quit?
Not any-more?
!?


ROLL
Kaya of Hoorai
From today on...
This is from Sagiri-sama.

Kaya of Hoorai.
From today on...
...I will be "oyakume" for Yuki Toudou-sama.
Kaya of Hoorai
From today on you will be "oyakume" for Yuki Toudou-sama.

What!?
This means...
...I am also "oyakume."
Nice to meet both of you.

KAGETORA
カゲトラ
#47 A Good "Oyakume"

You're...
...Hime's "oyakume"?
Um, does that mean you're trading with Kagetora!?
That is correct.

.....
Hime...
GRIP..
Who knows?
I certainly don't.
I was told to be "oyakume,"
but was not told to switch you out.
TAP

That is all.

Okay.
Surprised me.
ほっ PHEW

...Hm...

.....

Ka-getora!?

Hime, excuse me.
SST

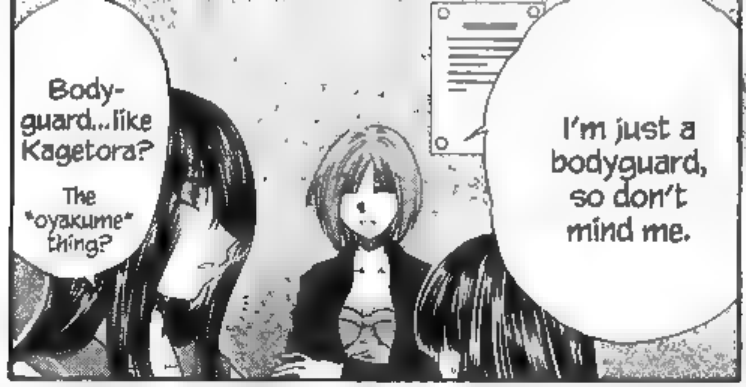
"Kaya" is fine.
We're the same rank.
Kaya-dono!
...Kaya.
Your duty is...
...only as "oyakume" to Hime?
Oh.
I get it.
Did you think I came to spy on your work?
!
I'm telling you now. I didn't get any orders like that.
I see...
I hope I'm just thinking too much...

I'll start duty tomorrow.
Oh well. I'll talk to you later.
Right.
She was probably surprised at this sudden turn of events.
I see.
Well, that's...
I noticed that Hime was worried too.

I don't know if that'll change your position.
As "oyakume," I plan to report everything to my master.
Oh. One more thing.

But I feel there's no need for two "oyakume."

WAVE
WAVE
TURN!
Yeah...
NOD
Hey, Yuki. Is she a ninja too?
CHATTER
CHATTER


Body-guard...like Kagetora?
The "oyakume" thing?
I'm just a bodyguard, so don't mind me.

That just gives away your duty, doesn't it?
I wouldn't do such a thing during duty.
SMILE

But you're not dressed like a ninja.
Even if you're on duty.
Kagetora usually dresses like a ninja.

From now on, I'm here, so there is no problem.
GIGGLE
GIGGLE
Kagetora doesn't hide it...
Yeah...
WHISPER WHISPER
That's true...

It sure is, but...
GLANCE

Don't say unlucky things like that.
Oh, sorry.
But isn't her job yours?

Kagetora... were you fired!?
BLEAH

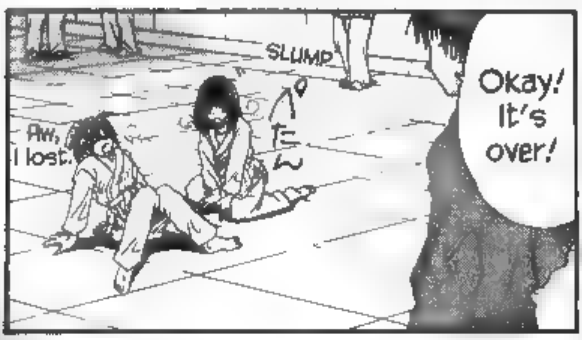
Ka-getora.
...checking my ability as "oyakume."
I didn't think she'd follow us to school.
I guess she really is...
Kagetora! It's P.E. next. We need to go to the gym.
GASP
The girls' teacher is absent.
Today, the boys and girls are together.
It's judo.
Oh.
Yes...
Hime?
STOP
That's true.
Come on! We have to hurry because we have to change!
PUSH
PUSH
You're the only one!
No matter who comes.
WHISPER
My "oyakume" is Kagetora, only you.

Hime...
Shoot...I even made Hime worry.
Yah!
Taah!
I need to get a grip.
Good luck to me!
GRIP
Oh, she's fired up.
If I do my duties as "oyakume," there should be no problem...
Girls, if I call your name, come up.
Umm, Tanabe!
Toudou!

Oh.
Hime's sparring.
Thank you.
ペコッ
BOW
Yes!
I wonder if she'll be okay...
Whoa!
Gggg-
DODGE
Whoa!
すかっ!
WOBBLE!
Yah!
TUG

Aaargh!
GRAB
Got it...
DASH
er...
DAAAASH
Urrgh!
TUG
FLOAT
Whoa...
Yaah!
KICK

THUD!

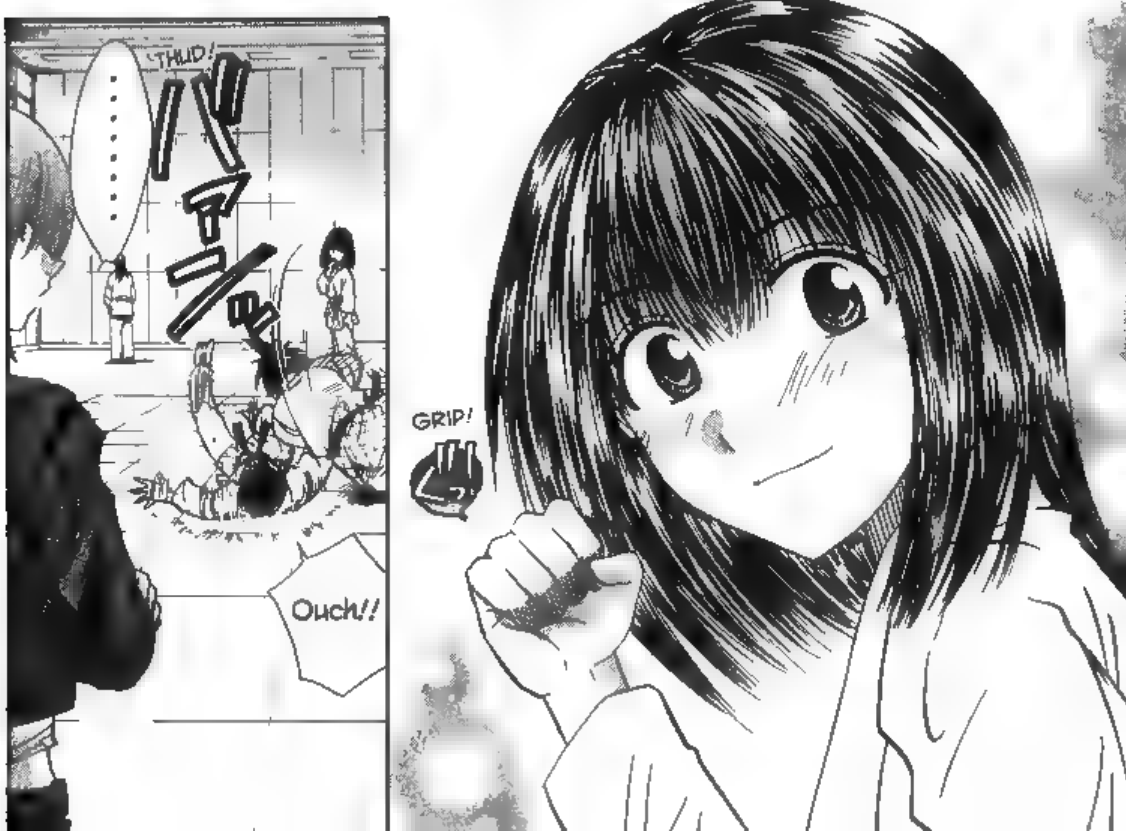

SLUMP
Aw, I lost.
Okay! It's over!

...Huh?

I won...

Oh.
THUD!
OW!
GLANCE
Really!?
RUFFLE RUFFLE
Wow, you got better, Yuki!
Good job!

Good job, Hime!
SMILE


THUD!
.....
Ouch!!
GRIP!

Sensei, it's impossible to win against Kagetora.
He's a ninja.
Hey, how weak.
Everyone's losing to Kazama.
It makes me more pathetic.
Don't keep winning while looking the other way...
What?
No way!
Does any girl want to try?
What, giving up already?
All guys.
TAP...
Kagetora.
Can you...
...teach me?

Is this testing me too?
That's fine...
.....
CHATTER
Really?
She's a ninja too.
CHATTER
What?
Someone's going against Kazama?
Ninja vs ninja?
Awesome.
CHATTER
CHATTER

...Fine with me.
Maybe we should be more ninja-like.
It might be too boring to just show them judo.
Everyone seems very interested.
Look at the crowd forming.
...let's start!
VWOOSH
Well then...
SST
Huh? A punch!?
That's not judo!
But wow!

SLAP
SLAP
FOO!
WOOSH!
TAP

Dang...
CHATTER
CHATTER
This isn't P.E. anymore.
She's as good as Kazama.
I need to give it all I've got...
She's good.
SIGH
WIPE
Kagetora...
FLOAT...
GACK!

THUD

BUZZ!
Whoa!?
No way!
It hit her straight in the abs!!

...Phew, that was good.
No wonder you're "oyakume."
ZWISH
Thank you very much.
I don't know her intentions, but I guess it's okay for now.
ワイ BUZZ
ワイ BUZZ
Kunoi-chi's are strong!
That was amazing!

Kagetora!
Yup!
I guess if you're taught by someone like him, you'll get strong.
Even you...
That was cool.
BLUSH
Awesome...
Reading lips
You were awesome!
MOUTHING
Hmm.
Noth-ing.
Yuki? What's up?

I see...
STRETCH
Today was tiring...
Phew...

I didn't think I'd win in judo.
I'm so happy...

Good job, Hime!
I guess if you're taught by someone like him, you'll get strong.

Yeah...
Thanks to Kagetora...
What is?
BA-DUM
!?
SPLASH!

Kaya-san!?
Sorry to disturb you during your bath.
I just wanted to make sure you didn't hurt yourself.
From today...
I don't think so.
SPLASH
Then I can wash your back.
Since I'm here.
...Hime.
Oh.
Yes?
I'm getting nervous.
How's Kagetora?

How is he as "oyakume"?
Is what I meant.
Oh. Of...of course.
Huh!?
Wha... what do you mean!?
BA-DUM
Is there anything else?
No!
There isn't!
If I didn't have Kagetora, I wouldn't be where I am today.
Um, Kagetora as "oyakume."
He's helped me a lot.
I thought she knew about us.
Phew, that scared me.
BA-DUM
BA-DUM
BA-DUM
BA-DUM

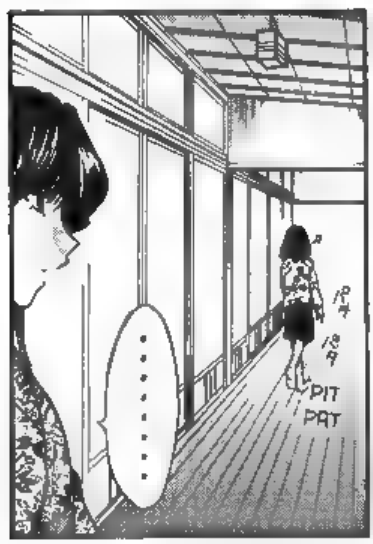
Kagetora...
...to me...
...is the best "oyakume."
Is that so...
.....
I wonder if I said something wrong.
She's been quiet...
Kaya-san.
.....
.....

What is it?
Master... I have a report about "oyakume."
Oh, you're done.
Bathing...
Mom
...I was looking at Hime.
Today...
Huh? About Kagetora!?
Um...
Kaya-san is praising Kagetora.
Thank goodness...
There is no problem with her.
Hime's martial arts basic skills are there.
Kagetora is doing a great job as "oyakume."

Really.
I understand.
Good job, Kaya.
SMILE

Yes!

Have a good rest tonight.
Yuki, you can skip training today.


PIT
PAT

She must think well of Kagetora.
Hee hee.
Mom's face...

Kaya.
Please tell Kagetora...
...to come to the main room.
Yes.

You're there, right?
Come out and show yourself...

.....

Haha, you found me.
Well, I wasn't hiding.

It's fine.
Well, any order I will follow...
How's your "oyakume"?
But Shirou-maru...
I understand now.
What you said before.
That's your job.
You can do as you like.
I told master only that Kagetora is doing a good job.
Are you okay with that?
...I see.
It has nothing to do with me, though.

I'll just watch over her as the eldest of the Kazama brothers.
Whatever master decides, it's her decision.
I wonder what they are talking about?
I told Kagetora
that master needed him.
Who knows?
Master.
I heard you wanted me...

I'm surprised that Yuki... became so strong.
It's been three years since you've become "oyakume."
You've done a good job.
I'm really grateful.
Even so, without you she wouldn't be who she is today.
Like I said the other day, it was Hime's efforts that made her strong.
Kagetora.
You did a really good job.
Thank you! You're too kind...

Return to Hoorai Village and await your next mission.
Huh...
Your duty here is done.

This is an order.
Leave the Toudou house as soon as possible.
To Be Continued in Volume 11

KAGETORA カゲトラ

#0.5 Meeting

Takaou.
Shirou-maru.
So a hawk.
So a wolf.
.....
Brother Taka has a hawk.
He still can't fly.
Pew!
Kagura
Brother Shirou has a wolf.
He had the most fire.
Nachi
Maybe I should ask master.
Kagetora, so a tiger...
I guess I can't do that.
He'll eat me.

Oh, I found it.
What's this?
Monkey
I found the little monkey by its mother's side, not knowing what to do.
And were attacked by a bear or something.
I guess they strayed from their group.
I'm making it!?
Huh!?
Phew.
Well, why don't we have lunch?
You're hungry, right?
The food Kagetora makes is pretty good, little monkey.
I thought I should leave him in nature,
but I felt sorry for him and brought him home.
Yeah!
KYE!

Master!? This monkey understands you!?
I taught him some just for fun, and he learned.
Monkeys are intelligent animals.
Wow...
Hmm.
A monkey...
You don't have an animal yet, no?
Oh! Why don't you take him in and raise him as your ninja monkey?
Huh!? A monkey!?

Mas-
ter...
Here,
a rice
ball.
You're not
listening...
KYE
But if you
compare
them to my
brothers'
animals...
Seems
a little
weak...
A monkey...
?
PIT
PAT
.....
I won't
take your
food.
Hey,
monkey.
Where
are you
going?
JUMP
JUMP
KYE!
PLOP

I found the little monkey by its mother's side, not knowing what to do.
Is this your mother's grave?
KYE.
I see...
You...
...lost your mother too...
You should...
...offer a flower to the grave.
KYE?
SIT
KUSTLE

You want to become a ninja monkey?
What's that?
KYE?
Like a partner.
Hmm.
Like a brother... a best friend.
Partner?
Yeah!?
KYE KYE!
Okay!!
Then we should decide on a name.
How about... Kosuke?
KYE KYE!
Then it's set! You're Kosuke.
KYEE...

Hey Brother Taka, you think monkeys have dreams too?
Of course.
They have emotions.
He's talking in his sleep.
Oh yeah.
I wonder what he's dreaming.
By the way, are you ready for tomorrow?
You're leaving for Tokyo.
You don't even know what your duty as "oyakume" is, right? Are you going to be okay?
I'm a bit worried... but I'll be fine!
I have Kosuke.
Besides, this has been my dream!
Well...
Go work hard.
Of course!
Woke up
KYE!
And continued in Volume 1

Bonus and Afterword Page

This is Segami. Yay, 2 digits!! (laugh) I finally got to Volume 10! Only a little bit more until the ending. Everyone, please hang on until the end .

About Ninjas, Part 10

I recently found a "chain sickle" at a shop! Of course I bought it immediately (laugh). But for safety reasons, it doesn't cut. When I was looking at it in the store, a lady came to talk to me.

Lady: "What is that?"

Me: "It's a chain sickle."

Lady: "Oh my... you're like a demon girl."

Me: "Huh...?"

Demon girl? Was she talking about me?

The lady left, smiling.

A demon... really... Well, I guess a demon *girl* is better than a demon *hag*... But it's unusual to have a stranger call you a demon.

Well, I guess it was an interesting experience?

Well! This year I will hope to be a demon for work! I have to look on the bright side! (⇒ good thing) Oh, I also bought a Fortune Cat ♡

It has a cute face ☆

About Traveling

Whenever I have time, I go on a short trip! But lately... I feel my strength isn't keeping up with me. My travel mate is always worried about me. This isn't good!

In order to play, I need strength and endurance!! But I have no time to go to the gym!! (cry) ...So for now I try to get sleep before I take a trip.

So that at least I don't fall asleep in a ferry... (sweat)

Lately

My editor, Monta-san, has moved to a different division. I've known him for ten years, and I'm really sad... To show my appreciation, I will continue to work hard! Thank you very much!!

Lately, part 2

I got into sort of an accident... At a train station, my foot got caught in the space between the train and the platform. A stranger pushed my feet (⇒ accidentally) and I was surprised but... the people around me were surprised even more (laugh).

Anyway, I was able to get it out fast, so they didn't have to stop operations, but I still have a bruise on my leg. These accidents are bound to happen, but I hope they don't happen to me anymore.

Thank you

Thank you for all of the letters!! There are so many regulars!! (laugh)

When this book comes out, I hope to have responded to all of them (I hope). I'm sorry it takes so long!

I'll continue to work hard, so please stay with me.

Special Thanks!

Assistants: Tanaka-kun, Oshima-chan, Takasou-san
Editor: Mr. Morita, Mr. Yonemura
Comics Editor: Houdo-san
And all of the readers!!

Akira Segami

About the Author

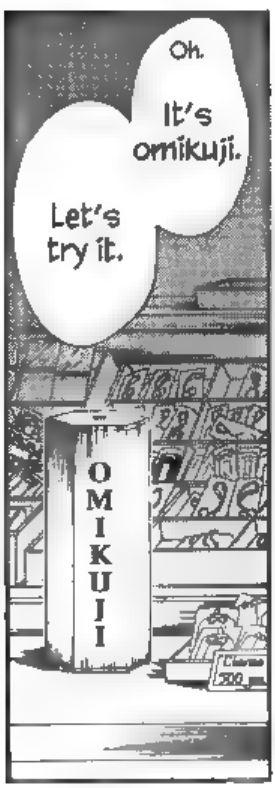
Akira Segami's first manga was published by Shogakukan in 1996. He went on to do a few other small projects, including two short stories entitled "Kagetora" in 2001 and 2002. The character proved to be popular with fans, so Segami began his first ongoing series, Kagetora, with Kodansha in 2003. The series continues to run today.

Translation Notes

Japanese is a tricky language for most Westerners, and translation is often more art than science. For your edification and reading pleasure, here are notes on some of the places where we could have gone in a different direction with our translation of the work, or where a Japanese cultural reference is used.

***Butsuma*, page 59**

A *butsuma* is a room in Japanese households where the Buddhist altar is set up. It is a location where family members or visitors can go to give their respects to the deceased.

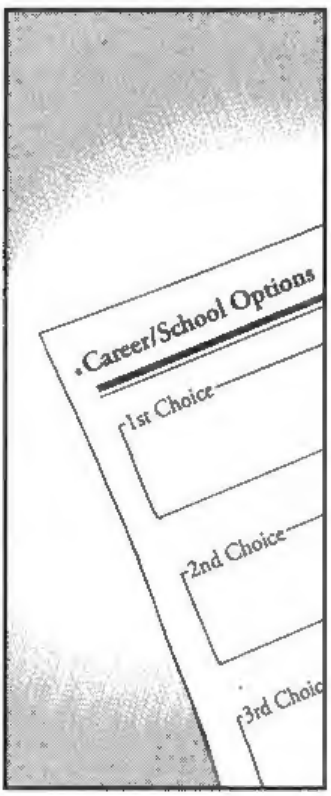


***Omikuji*, page 98**

Omikuji are fortunes written on thin strips of paper. They are sold at temples and shrines. Japanese people will usually buy one on New Year's Day to see what kind of fortune they will have for the year. First you shake a container with bamboo sticks. One will come out of the hole in the container, which will have a number on it. You take a slip of paper from one of the drawers with your number. *Omikuji* fortunes range from good to bad in six to seven levels.

***Ema*, page 102**
At a shrine, there are wooden plates called *ema,* and visitors write their wishes on them. They then leave them at the shrine in the hope that their wishes come true. Most people wish for good health, success in business, passing entrance exams, love, or wealth.

Career/School Options, page 122
In Japanese high schools, they make you fill out a paper to indicate what you want to do after you graduate. Then your teacher will talk to you about what you need to achieve those goals. It is like guidance counseling.



***Kunoichi*, page 144**

A *kunoichi* is a female ninja. They were given psychological skills to seduce men who had political power. They were mainly hired to collect information, often disguising themselves as dancers, geisha, and prostitutes.

Kaya's moves, page 163

Ono here is surprised because Kaya tried to hit Kagetora. This is a karate move and not a judo move. In judo, you would try to grab your opponent rather than hitting them.

Kazama Brother names, page 184

The "rou" in Shiroumaru is the kanji for wolf. The "taka" in Takaou is the kanji for hawk. And "tora" in Kagetora is the kanji for tiger. It's not mentioned anywhere in the manga what animal their father Tenshu carries, but we assume it's an eagle, for the "shu" in Tenshu is the kanji for eagle.

LOVE, NINJA STYLE!

Kagetora the ninja is in love with his master's daughter, Yuki. But Kagetora's strong sense of duty has kept him from confessing his feelings . . . until now. He has decided that nothing's more important than love, and he's ready to tell Yuki just how he feels. But does sharing his feelings for Yuki mean that Kagetora can't be her ninja trainer any longer?

INCLUDES SPECIAL EXTRAS AFTER THE STORY!

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